(b) and (c) Improvement, expansion and ensuring quality service in Speed Post is a continuous process. A separate Business Development Directorate within the Department has been set up to manage Speed Post on business lines.

[English]

Survey for New Rail Line between Dhulia and Indore

3638. DR. SAHEBRAO SUKRAM BAGUL : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any survey has been conducted recently for new rail line between Dhulia and Indore via Narona and Shirpur in Maharashtra;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : (a) to (c) A survey for new BG line from Dhule to Nardana and its extension upto Shirpur, is currently in progress. There is no proposal for taking up a survey for a new line from Shirpur to Indore at present.

[Translation]

Gauge Conversion between Ranchi and Lohardaga

3639. SHRI RAM TAHAL CHAUDHARY : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the provisions for gauge conversion between Ranchi and Lohardaga and to extend it upto Tori have been made in the supplementary Demands for 1996-97;

(b) if so, the details of the works undertaken in this direction upto July, 1997; and

(c) the time by which the above work is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs clearance has been obtained and preliminary arrangements are being made for taking up the work. Rs. 10 crores has been provided in the budget 1997-98 for this work.

(c) The work is expected to be completed in about 10 years time subject to availability of resources.

[English]

Funding of Technology for Paper Industry

3640. SHRI SURESH PRABHU : Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Technology Development Board (TDB) has approved a proposal to fund the Commercialisation of an Eco-friendly pulping technology for the paper industry;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of other ancillary industry likely to be helped therefrom?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH) : (a) and (b) The Technology Development Board has received a proposal to fund the commercialisation of eco-friendly pulping technology for the paper industry from a Pune based private sector company. The proposal has gone through various stages of evaluation and the final decision is dependent upon the response of the applicant to the specific queries made by the Board.

(c) The proposal envisages recovery of by-products-lignin and hemicellulose, besides pith from effluent generated by the plant. There is, therefore, a possibility of growth of ancillaries based on lignin as raw material.

[Translation]

Construction of Broad Gauge Line from Ajmer to Ahmedabad

3641. SHRI TARACHAND BHAGORA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether laying of broad gauge line from Ajmer to Ahmedabad via Chittorgarh-Udaipur (Rajasthan) has been taken up; and

(b) if so, the time by when the construction work of this line has been started?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : (a) and (b) Work has been taken up for Gauge conversion of Ajmer-Chittaurgarh-Udaipur at a cost of Rs. 262 crs.-Udaipur-Ahmedabad Gauge Conversion is not yet sanctioned. Tenders have been invited and actual work is expected to start by Oct.'97.

[English]

Promotion of Senior Technicians

3642. SHRI BHERU LAL MEENA :
SHRI PARASRAM MEGHWAL :

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether posts were reduced in the cadre of Sr. Engineering Assistant and Engineering Assistant which diminished the promotion chance of Senior Technicians;